

BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

2000

ANNUAL REPORT

Environmental Health is an organized community effort aimed at minimizing the public's exposure to environmental hazards and the prevention of human disease and injury by identifying environmental factors contributing to the human conditions and modifying them to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy. Environmental Health is accomplished through a broad spectrum of professional disciplines united by their shared mission. Furthermore, it is the science and the art of: (1) identifying the disease or injury agent through assessment, (2) preventing the agent's transmission through the environment by way of policy development -providing intervention measures, and (3) protecting people from the exposure to contaminated and hazardous environments (a product of assurance).

Environmental Health has the capability to:

- Respond rapidly to outbreaks of disease and chemical and physical disasters.
- Educate in the promotion of a healthful and safe environment.
- Assess risks and their impact on lives.
- Put information into perspective, then act in a logical and educated manner in evaluating its significance.
- Enforce public health statutes to protect the community and its people.
- Prevent the introduction of agents of disease.

Some of issues addressed by Environmental Health in 2000 were:

- Clandestine Methamphetamine Laboratories – Investigated 31 separate laboratory sites to ensure the protection of public health.
- Community Outreach Education – Environmental Health Educators delivered over 430 presentations to the community.

- On-Site Sewage System Monitoring – Monthly maintenance activities reported by licensed septic tank pumpers are entered in to a database and outreach activities including radio and newspaper advertising, and continued distribution of pamphlets and video's through real estate and contractors was completed.

The goals of the division are to:

- Assure a healthful living environment for all residents of the area.
- Assure a healthy environment by implementing positive community changes necessary to assure the public has the opportunity to achieve and maintain a high level of environmental quality.
- Further assure the programs of Environmental Health are planned, operated and maintained in a manner consistent with good environmental practices and public health law.

To achieve these goals it is essential that:

- Adequate resources and manpower be available.
- Continuing education and training in the environmental field be maintained.
- The Environmental Health Specialists interact with individuals and groups in the community and with other governmental agencies, at both the local and state level.

Our programs shall be consistent with and supportive of the disciplines and agencies which are involved, directly or indirectly, with the overall environmental health protection effort.

The Environmental Health Division is divided into two sections: The Land Use/Liquid Waste/Water Supply Section, and the Surveillance Section. There are currently fifteen plus full time employees budgeted in Environmental Health. The continued growth within the local economy, as well as legislated responsibilities, has contributed to increased workloads.

-PROGRAM REVIEW-

- ◆ **Environmental Health Education** – Environmental health education is a coordinated effort encompassing all environmental health programs by providing public education, community involvement and outreach on a vast number of topics. Programs have been established in solid and household hazardous waste disposal, on-site sewage and wastewater, water quality, vector control, clandestine drug labs and indoor air quality. Additional educational programs and materials have been developed on prevention of communicable diseases, food safety and foodborne illness. Major focuses of this program in the past year have been the importance of handwashing and the health effects of nitrates in drinking water. This program routinely establishes education through positive use of the media in newspaper articles, press conferences, and public service announcements. The funding for this program is supplied in part through local capacity funds authorized by the legislature. This program has been successful in increasing community awareness through educational efforts in priority Environmental Health issues. A major emphasis has been placed in reaching the Hispanic population through Spanish radio, newspaper and translated materials. Public reliance on health department employees as a sound local resource on the environment, in a non-regulatory manner, is a benefit to the community, as well as, the department.
- ◆ **Chemical/Physical Hazards** - In accordance with WAC 246-205, this office is responsible for investigating and declaring properties used as clandestine drug labs as fit or unfit for occupancy after seizure by local law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, we are required to review test data after cleanup activities in order to declare the property suitable for re-occupancy. In 2000, a total of thirty-one drug labs were discovered, each resulting in numerous man-hours investigating and resolving each site. Completion of cleanup at these sites remains difficult with few actually initiating any cleanup or testing of the property. In July of 2000, a Site Hazard Assessment Grant was obtained from the Department of Ecology to fund response to clandestine drug labs, investigate potential hazardous waste dumping, and perform site hazard assessments of known contaminated sites. Additional services currently include the provision of information and referrals for consumers on various concerns including Radon, Lead, Formaldehyde, and Asbestos.
- ◆ **Food Service** - Pursuant to WAC 246-215, our Environmental Health Specialists are charged with promoting and protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the public and preventing the spread of disease by food. This is accomplished, in part, through routine, unannounced inspections of all public food service establishments throughout the bi-county area. In addition to routine inspections, activities include responding to complaints received from the public, epidemiological investigations of suspect foodborne illness

outbreaks, and plan reviews of new or remodeled food service establishments. Each regulatory inspection includes an educational piece, either one on one with an operator or through information conveyed to owners and managers. The number of routine food service inspections per establishment is prioritized through risk assessment. Risk is evaluated based on hazard analysis of menu items, population served, and facilities available. All food service workers in the state of WA are required to possess a current food worker card. The cards are valid for a period of two to five years. The education classes and exam for issuance of the card are provided by our EHS personnel at the Kennewick office a minimum of four times per week. Educational outreach to food service establishments is also accomplished through the use of our surveillance section newsletter, published quarterly, and through special classes and mailings, as the need arises.

- ◆ **Solid Waste** - Pursuant to WAC 173-304, and WAC 173-351 we are responsible for review, permitting, and inspection of solid waste disposal sites. Currently permitted sites include municipal solid waste landfills, solid waste transfer stations, inert and demolition waste landfills, petroleum contaminated soil remediation sites, organic waste application projects, drop box sites, compost facilities, and household hazardous waste facilities. A portion of this program is funded through a coordinated prevention grant from the Department of Ecology. A major focus of this program over the past 12 months has been providing input to the Department of Ecology on the revision of WAC 173-304. Extensive review has been provided on the remediation activities at the Pasco and Richland Landfill sites. Continued monitoring activities were performed at all permitted facilities.
- ◆ **Sewage System Permits** - Pursuant to WAC 246-272, we are responsible for application review and issuance of on-site sewage system permits. This requires site inspections, soil and sieve analysis, which in part determines permit approval or disapproval. Sewage system installer permitting, existing sewage system evaluations and mortgage certifications for purposes of home sale approvals are also conducted. In 2000 this office implemented a monitoring program for all on-site sewage systems in Benton and Franklin counties by tracking maintenance activities, and providing information on the proper maintenance of systems through effective use of the media. In addition, the database housing records of existing sewage systems has been expanded to include more system information on each new site.
- ◆ **Water Supply** - The department maintains records on public water systems. We review Class B public water systems not governed specifically by the State Department of Health. We also provide consultation on private and public water systems, as well as assist other agencies (i.e. Departments of Health and Ecology, US Geological Survey, Soil Conservation Service) in conducting research studies and providing input to local water quality issues. In July of 1996, this office entered into an agreement with the State Department of Health to assume primary responsibility for the review and approval of public water supplies within the Benton-Franklin Health District consisting of a drilled well as a source and having two or less service connections. In addition, this agreement has allowed the Health Officer to streamline the requirements for these small systems serving residential connections, making systems much easier and less costly to develop. This office continues to participate in the direction of the Columbia Basin Groundwater

Management Area in a cooperative effort to respond to the widespread nitrate contamination of groundwater in the region.

- ◆ **Living Environment**- State and local regulations require the Department to respond to public nuisances, such as household garbage, sewage, animal waste, dead animals, etc. Each investigation requires establishing the validity of the complaint, determining its health significance, performing an evaluation, making recommendations and taking legal actions where necessary. State requirements also require overall sanitation inspections for safety, food service, noise levels and the status of heating and lighting in schools (K-12). New construction and remodel of school facilities (K-12) require plan review and pre-occupancy inspection prior to initial use to ensure compliance with state codes and guidelines. A recent responsibility includes investigation and guidance regarding indoor air issues within local school facilities, as well as the general public.
- ◆ **Vector Control** - Pursuant to WAC 246-100, the local Health Department is required to investigate all animal bite reports, quarantine animals and determine the need for rabies prophylaxis pursuant to the potential exposure of the rabies virus. In 2000, we investigated 363 animal bite complaints for possible rabies exposure; 11 of which required laboratory testing of the animal by the Washington State Public Health Laboratory in Seattle. Additional activities include providing public information and training in the prevention of all vector borne diseases.
- ◆ **Land Use/Subdivisions** - Pursuant to WAC 246-272 we are required to review land proposed for subdivision for suitability and use of on-site sewage disposal systems. Proposed lots that do not possess adequate site and soil conditions to effectively treat and dispose of sewage will cause degradation to the environment and a potential legal liability to the district. Sound working relationships with local planning departments is imperative to effectively respond to the public within the constraints of Growth Management Plans.
- ◆ **Swimming Pools** - State law requires inspection and permitting of public pools. In June of 2000, the department entered into an agreement with the State Department of Health to provide inspections and assume the permitting of public pools within Benton and Franklin Counties. This resulted in an extensive summer program in which this department hired a temporary employee to provide inspections, perform permitting activities and consultations to all permitted pools. In the off-season existing permanent staff continues this program. In 2000, 366 inspections at 157 separate facilities were completed. The pools regulated have shown a marked improvement in proper maintenance and water quality since the inception of a pool in 1995 program. This office is currently evaluating the efficacy of continuing the program in 2001, which due to additional programming shifts at the Department of Health would include further expanded duties.

Goals and Objectives 2001

Food Program

- Ensure at least 90% compliance by all Food Service Establishments with new “no bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods” policy by December, 2001.
- Attain a minimum of 2500 routine FSE inspections completed in 2001.
- Continue to develop and utilize Hispanic FSE inspection tools.
- Utilize food database to its fullest capacity.
- Implement alternate language FWC classes, utilizing the alternate language videos and state DOH supplied tests.
- Begin development of food manager certification program
- Implement new red/blue form code violations utilizing the most current point system supplied by DOH, but with our current supply of forms.
- Review; revise as necessary and complete Policy and Procedure Manuals (SOP's) for section.
- Completion of “Closure for Cause” policy for FSE by July 2001.
- Review all FSE risks and reassess/reassign inspection frequency, if necessary
- Replace most, if not all, paper record keeping with computerized logs.
- Ensure handwash trailer is finished and available for summer temporary events (July 1).
- Provide more information for the public at the website. Implement a comment/complaint site for questions/concerns of the public.

Water Supply

- Enter into an agreement with the Department of Health to assume some activities associated with a Sanitary Survey Program.
- Obtain DOH funding to conduct GIS mapping of Group A public water supplies
- Evaluate to encourage water testing of single family wells prior to OSS approval.

Educators

- Develop additional outlets for community brochure distribution
- Continue airing public service announcements
- Partner with the American Lung Association to acquire funding and implement a Master Home Environmentalist program.
- Provide training to environmental health staff in the delivery of educational presentations
- Review EH educational needs within the Hispanic community
- Develop additional environmental health curricula
- Provide regular articles for the BFHD web site
- Develop grade specific curricula for handwashing in elementary schools and food safety in secondary schools

Solid Waste

- Implement and educate the public in the requirements of the soon to be promulgated WAC 173-350
- Revise solid waste file management to improve records accessibility

Living Environment

- Develop indoor air program for limited residential review
- Redefine complaint response procedures
- Provide detailed information to all jurisdictions identifying where old nuisance ordinances are in conflict with current state rules

On-Site Sewage

- Provide additional training for on-site system staff
- Utilize OSS database to track maintenance of existing OSS.
- Expand OSS database to include property information regarding complaints

Swimming Pool

- Develop a revised fee structure for the permitting of public and semi-public pools
- Develop a procedure to insure that proposed facilities are reviewed and plans stamped by a third party engineer prior to submittal
- Evaluate the need to provide an annual training course for swimming pool operators

Chemical and Physical Hazards

- Develop routine procedures for performing initial investigations, and site hazard assessments
- Provide additional staff training in Clandestine Drug labs
- Complete a site hazard assessment
- Evaluate the continuation of a site hazard assessment program.
- Refine Clandestine Drug Lab Response procedures

Environmental Health

- Review and revise (as necessary) all policies and procedures

Administration

- Provide regular information regarding budget, revenue and expenditure for all land use programs
- Provide avenues for staff training in Access, Excel, and ARC view
- Provide timely response to request for supplies and repair of equipment

SERVICE CHANGES	1999	2000	PERCENT CHANGE
Septic Applications	702	590	-16.0%
Alternative System Applications	76	76	
Septic Permits	469	478	+2.0%
Septic Inspections	853	785	-8.0%
Existing System Evaluations	201	167	-17.0%
Short Plat Reviews	79	96	+21.5%
Mortgage Approvals (Sewer)	61	50	-18.0%
Mortgage Approvals (Water)	23	22	-4.3%
Class B Water Systems	19	20	+5.3%
Sewage Complaints	85	63	-26.0%
Rabies Investigations	357	363	+1.7%
Swimming Pool Inspections	344	366	+6.5%
Clandestine Drug Labs	25	31	+24.0%
Food Establishment Permits			
Permanent		*974	
Temporary	546	535	-2.0%
Total Food Service Inspections	2,806	**1,625	-42.1%
Total Foodhandler Classes	351	***312	-11.1%
Total Foodhandler Cards Issued	5,916	6189	+4.6%
Food Service Related Complaints	188	175	-6.9%
Suspect Foodborne Illness Investigations	78	69	-11.5%
Solid Waste Facilities	28	28	
Environmental Health Education			
Presentations	253	438	+73.1%
Contacts		*9,956	
Health Fairs	26	15	-42.3%
Contacts		*60,921	
Educational Materials	45	60	+33.0%

*Implemented revised accounting procedures.

**Deficit due to 100% staff turnover in surveillance program.

***Class size increase 25%.

Environmental Health Education Materials Developed in 2000

Pamphlets:

- Mold in the Home
- Pollen
- Meth Lab Clean Up
- Meth labs
- Syringe safety – Spanish
- Revised used Oil collections Sites Card
- Revised Ticks and Lyme Disease
- Reformatted most Corel documents into Word
- Developed Poisonous Plants Brochure

Fact Sheets:

- Chemical Safety - Revised
- Chlorine - Revised
- PH - Revised
- Alkalinity/Ca/Hardness/TDS - Revised
- Swimming Pool Turnover - Revised
- Swimming Pool Trouble-shooting - Revised

Other Materials:

- Quarterly newsletters for Food Service Establishments (4)
- Policy for animals in the classroom (developed for Pasco School District)
- Queso Fresco Informative Bulletin Boards
- Revised Foodworker Class slides and implemented new format
- Target Your Health Fair Activity Game
- Special Needs Foodworker Exam
- Lunch Safety flyer for Childcare
- Sandbox Guidelines flyer for Childcare
- Bare Hand Contact Policy (English & Spanish)
- Safe Turkey Tips for website/ media contacts
- Top 10 Toy Safety Tips for website/ media contacts
- Super Bowl Food Safety Tips for website/ media contacts
- Sanitizer Labels for Childcare Program

Curricula:

- Water Conservation – Middle School
- Real Estate Awareness – Adult
- Household Hazardous Waste – Adult
- Indoor Air Quality – High School/Middle School
- Poisons – Elementary School
- Clandestine Drug Labs – ADULT
- Seasonal Food Safety Presentation--ADULT
- Emerging Foodborne Diseases Presentation--ADULT
- “Poison Patrol” Poison Prevention Presentation—EARLY TEEN
- Revised “Animal Bites & Stings” Presentation and Demo Stations for Middle School

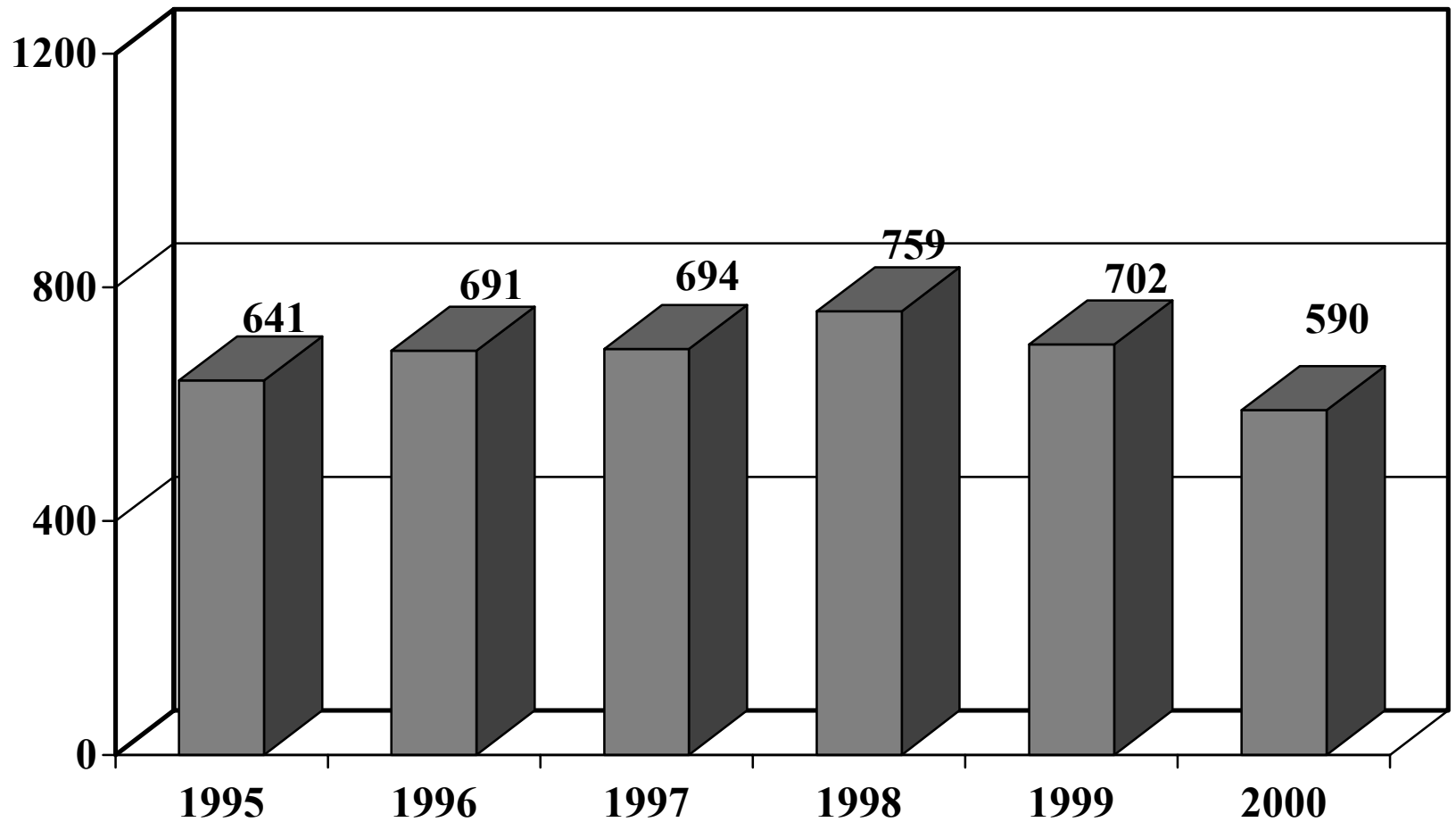
Other Information Distribution

- Home School Newsletters – Environmental Health Education
- Home Builders Association Newsletter– Wells
- Home Builders Association Newsletter – Septic Systems

GRAPH INDEX

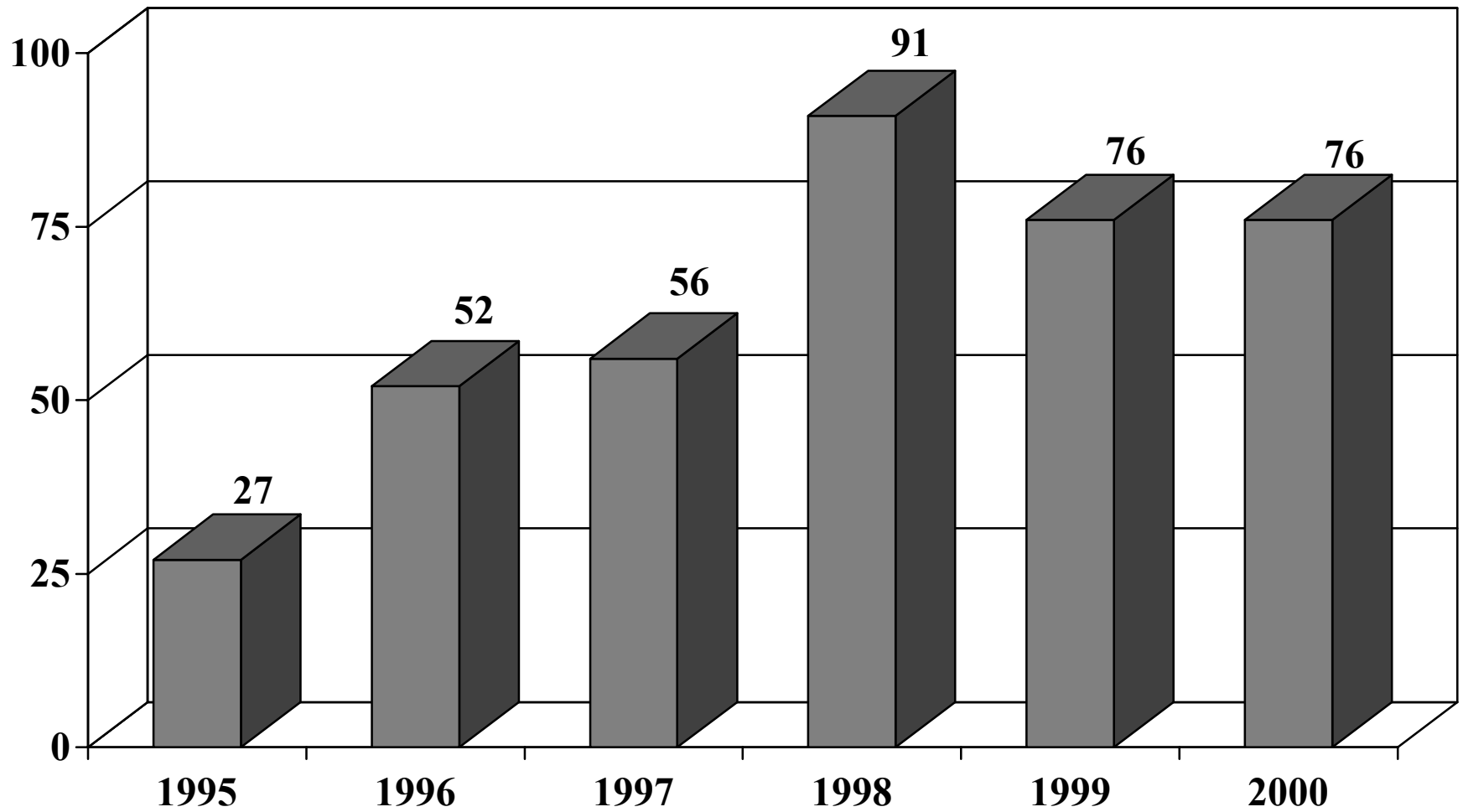
<u>Title of Graph</u>	<u>Graph</u>
SEPTIC SYSTEM APPLICATIONS	A
ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM APPLICATIONS	B
SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMITS	C
SEPTIC SYSTEM INSPECTIONS	D
EXISTING SYSTEM EVALUATIONS	E
MORTGAGE CERTIFICATIONS	F
SHORT PLAT REVIEWS	G
GROUP B PUBLIC WATER	H
COMPLAINTS	I
ANIMAL BITES	J
DRUG LABS	K
SEPTAGE APPLIED FOR BENEFICIAL USE	L
FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS	M
FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS TEMPORARY	N
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FOOD HANDLER CLASSES	P
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FOOD SERVICE RELATED COMPLAINTS	R
SUSPECT FOODBORNE ILLNESS INVESTIGATIONS	S
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION	T

SEPTIC SYSTEM APPLICATIONS



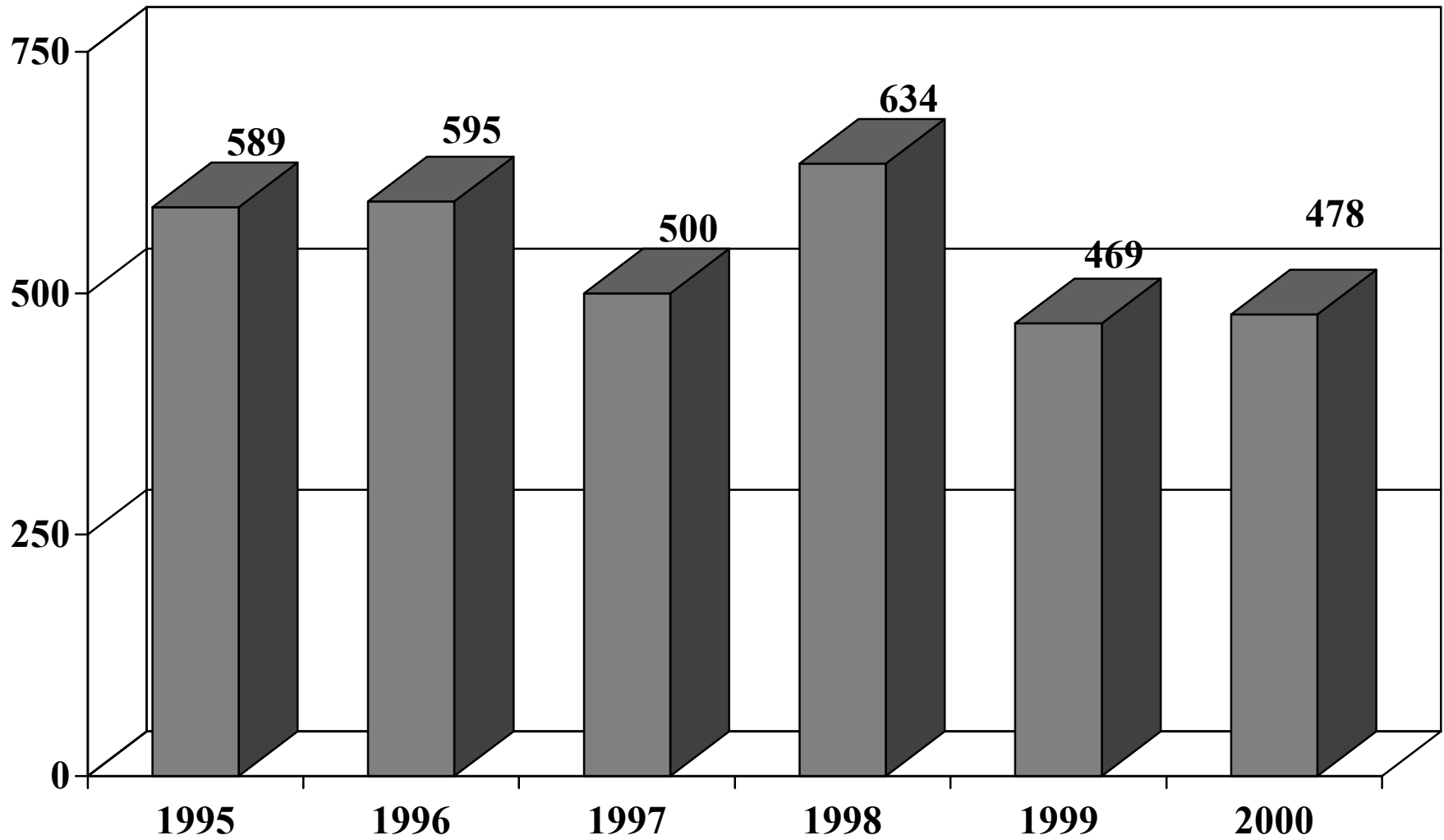
Graph A

ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM APPLICATIONS



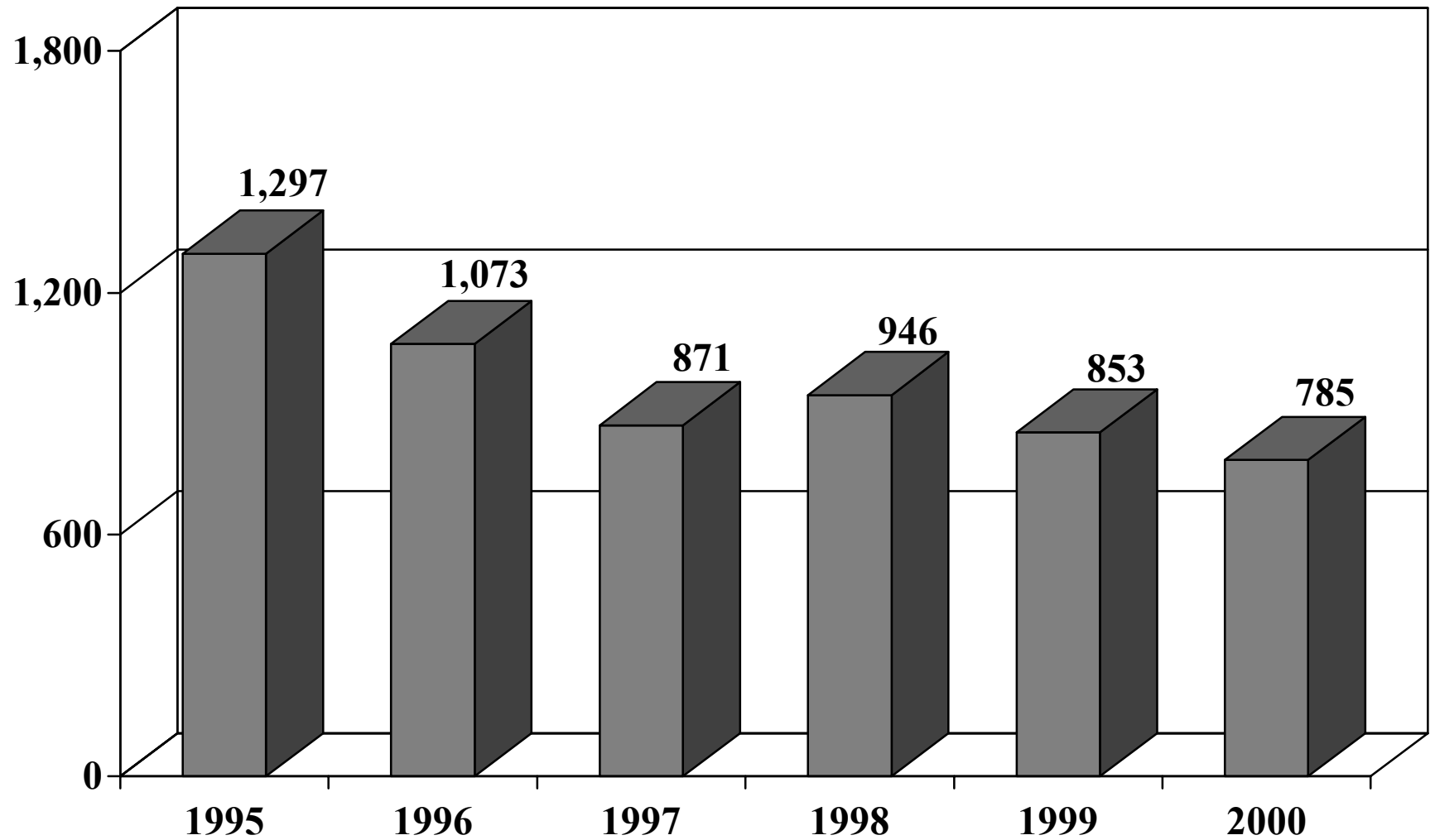
Graph B

SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMITS



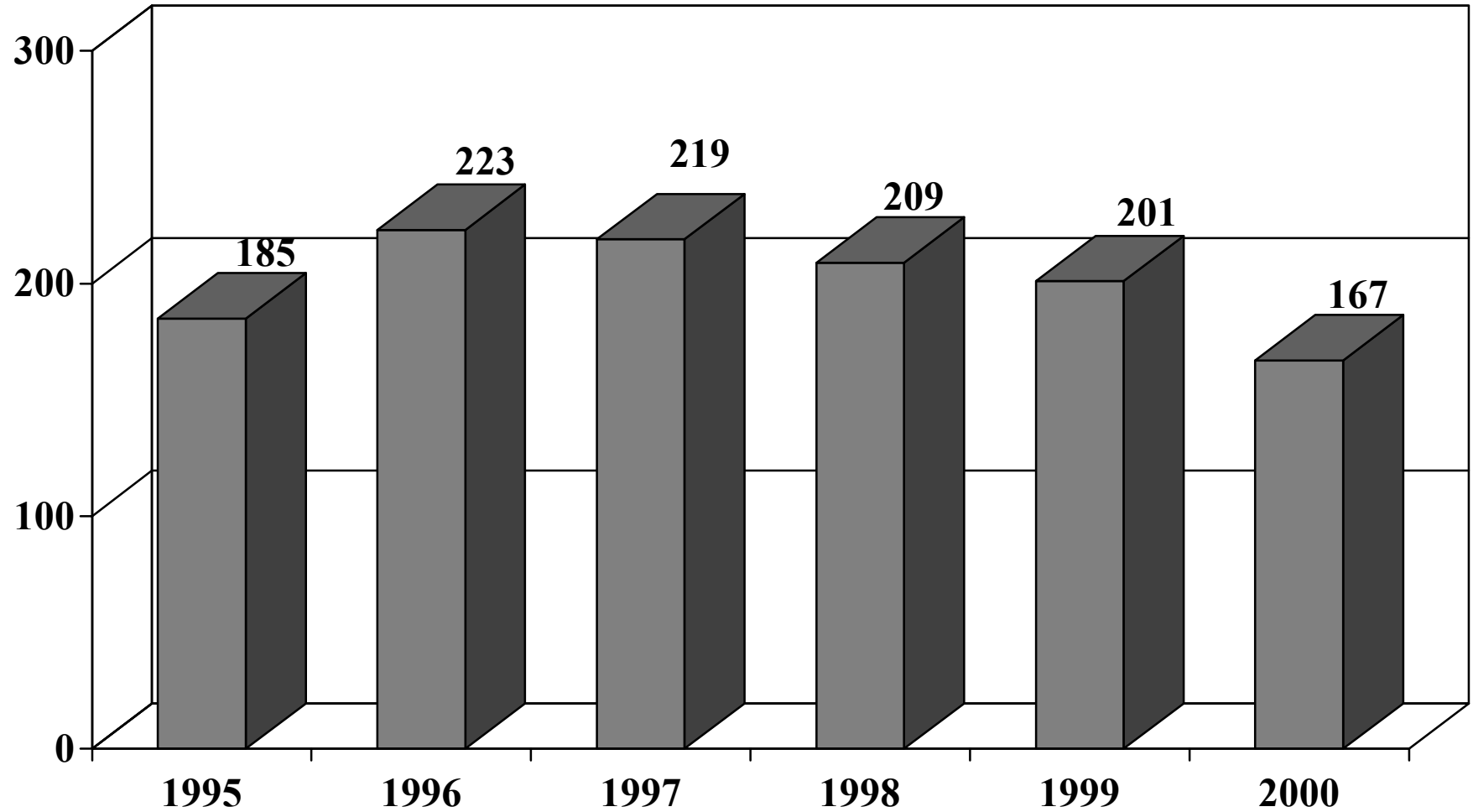
Graph C

SEPTIC SYSTEM INSPECTIONS



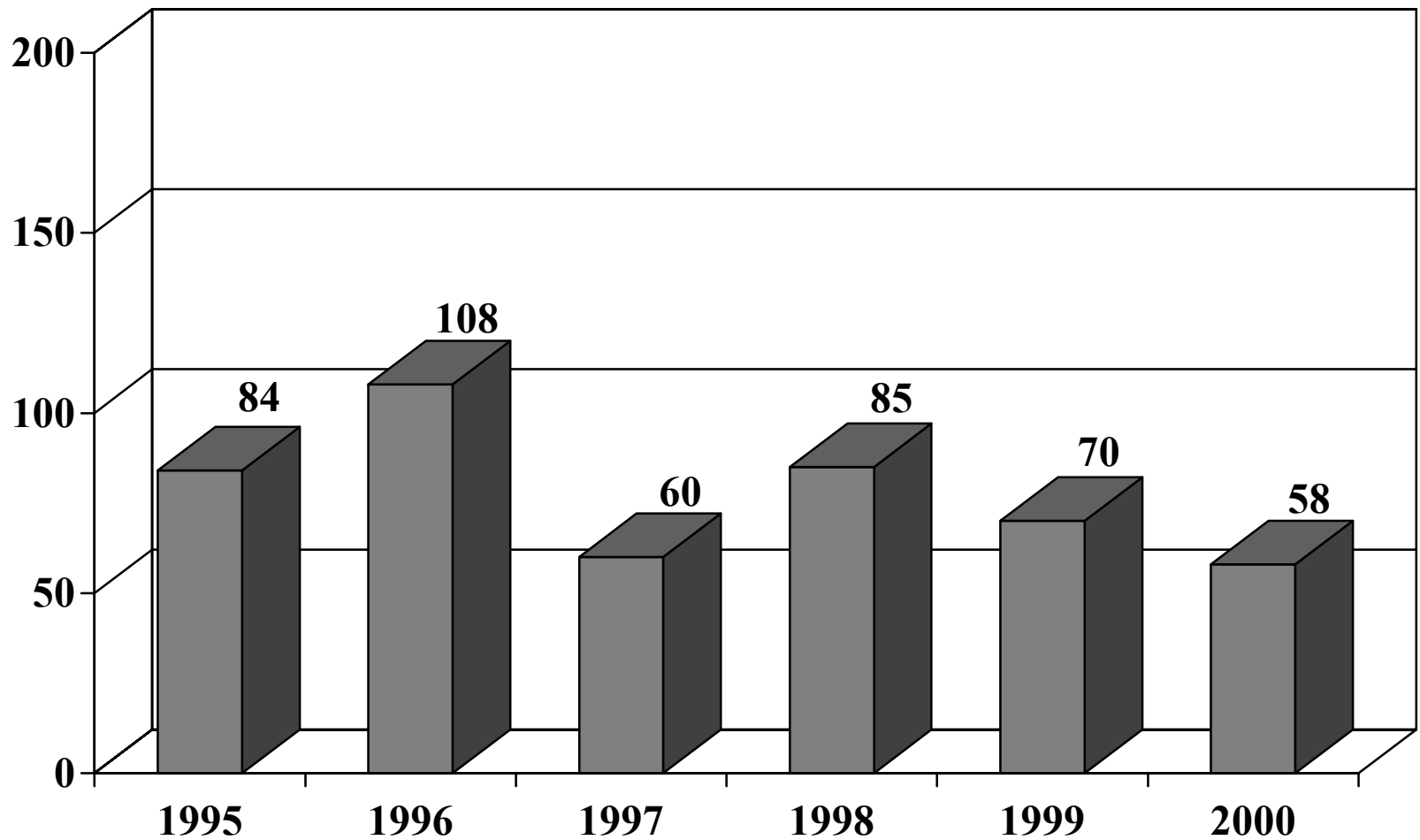
Graph D

EXISTING SYSTEM EVALUATIONS



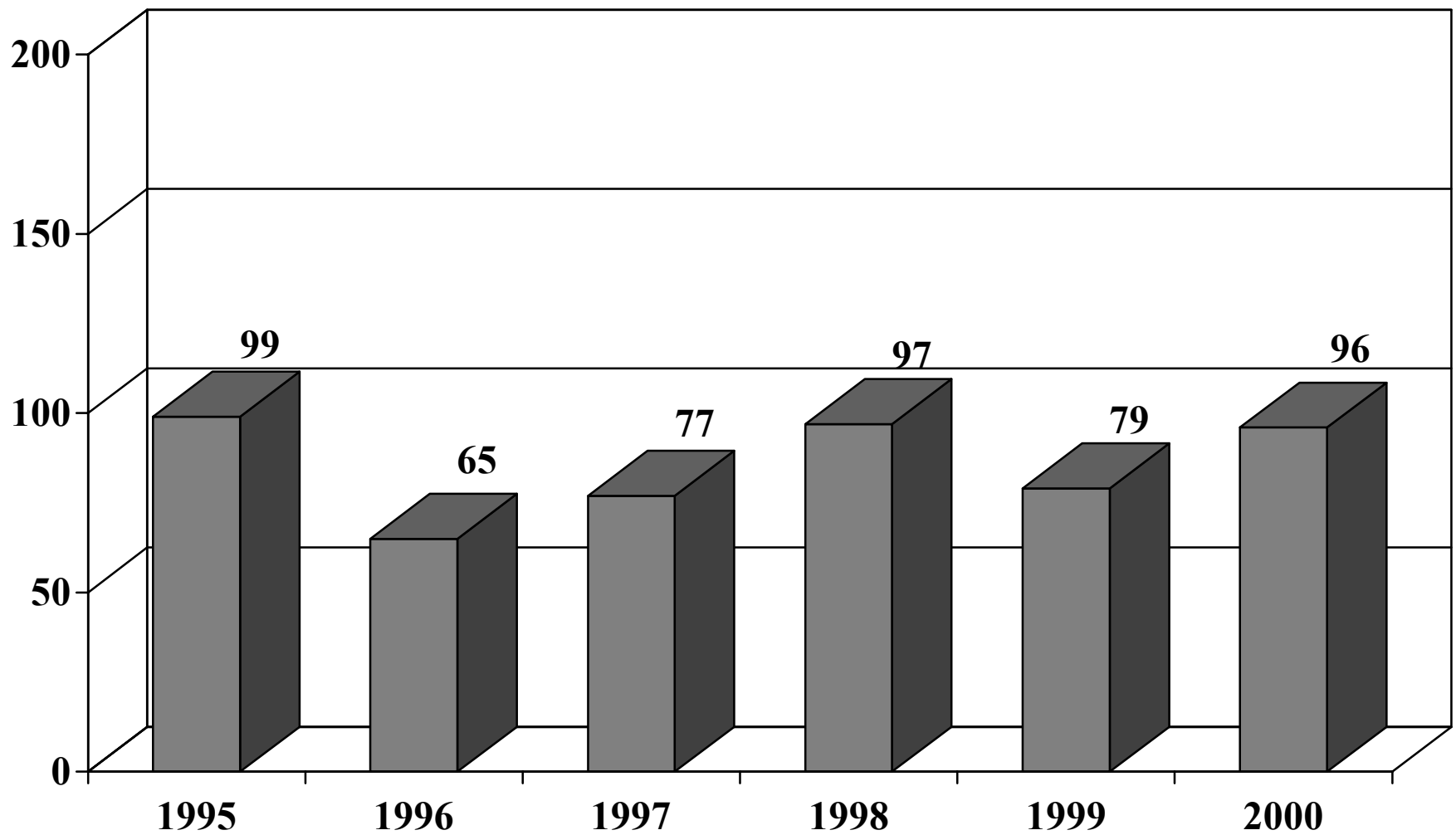
Graph E

MORTGAGE CERTIFICATIONS



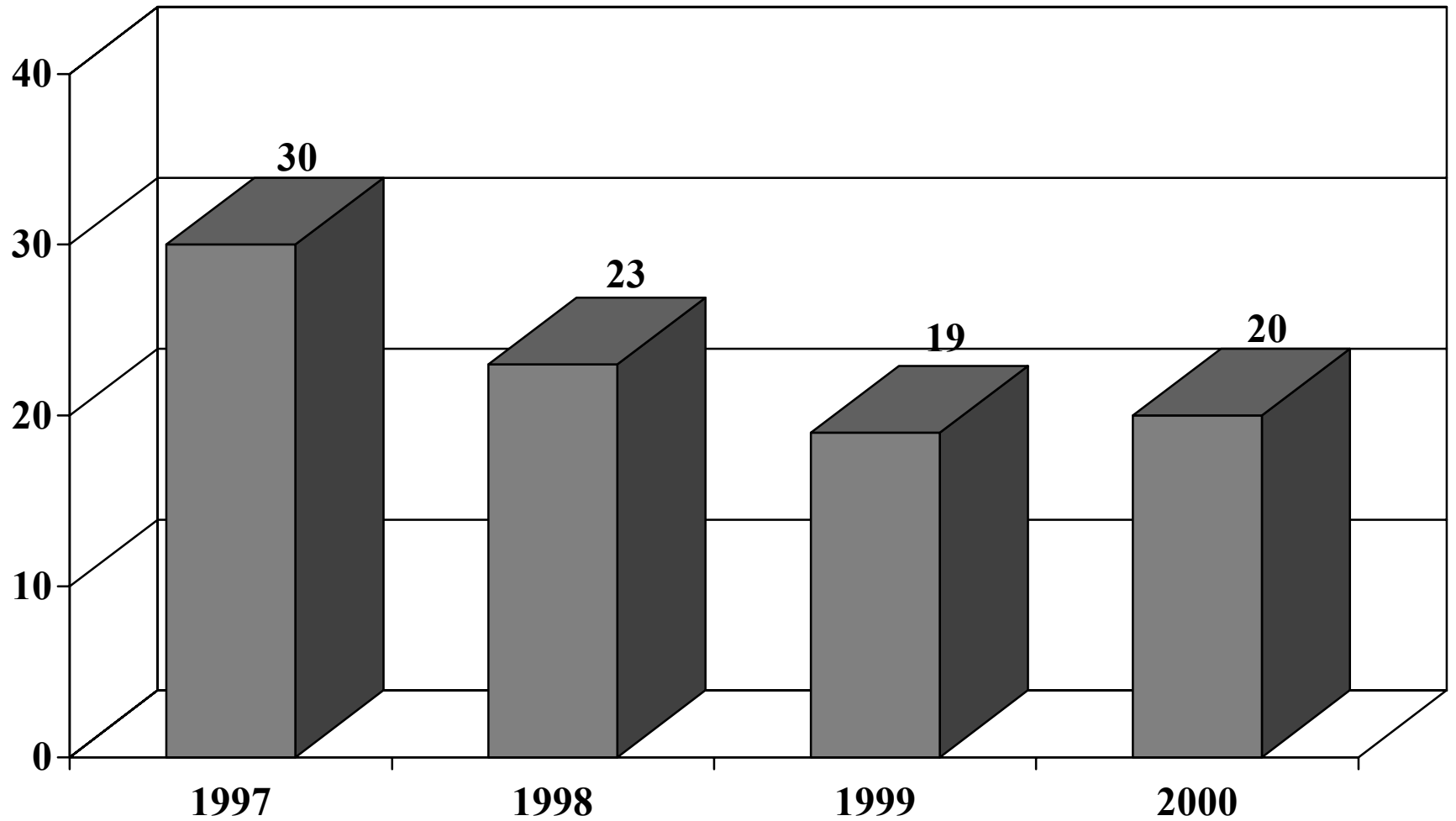
Includes sewer, water, both, and reinspections.

SHORT PLAT REVIEWS



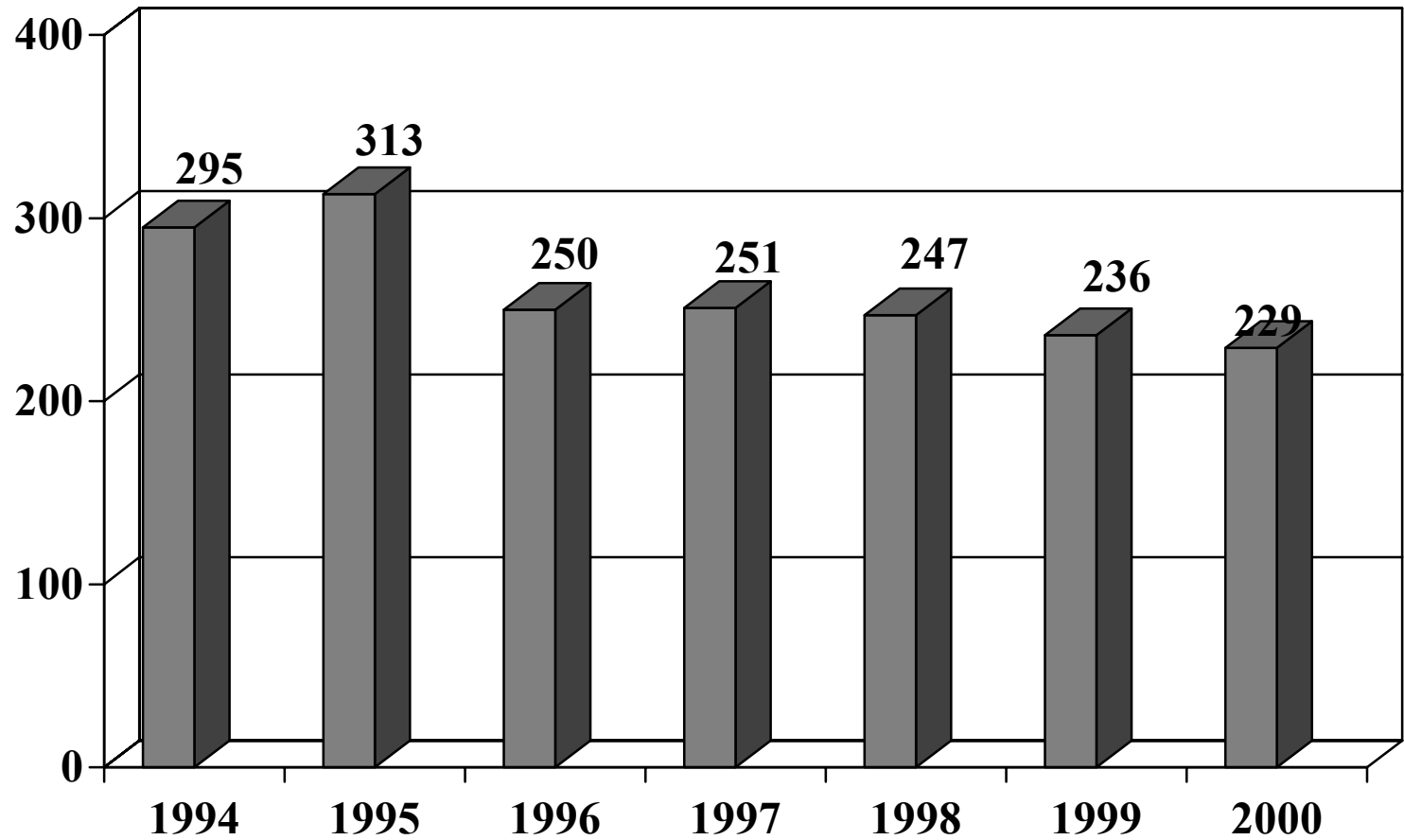
Graph G

GROUP B PUBLIC WATER



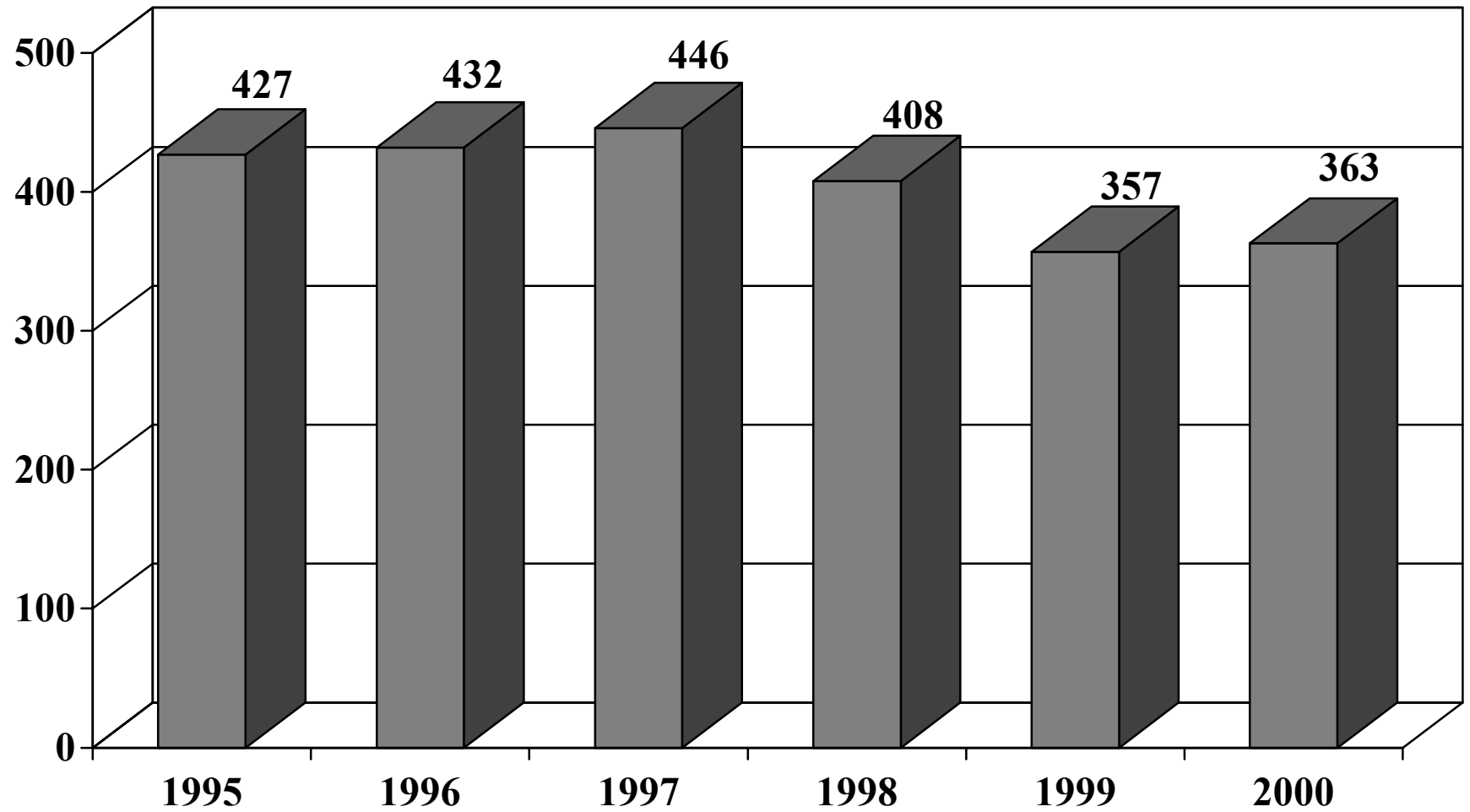
Graph H

COMPLAINTS



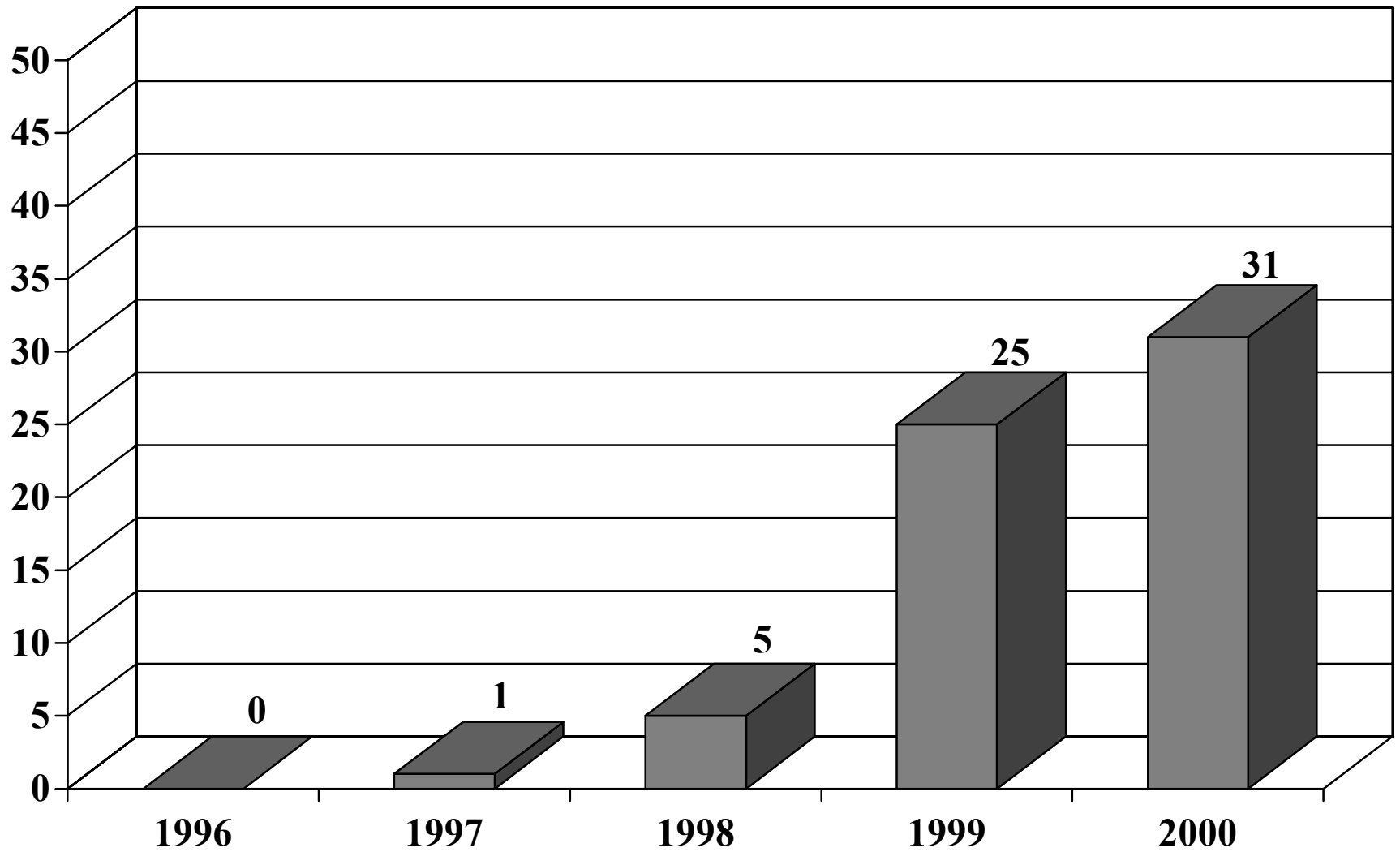
**Includes sewage, garbage, animal feces, dead animals,
pools and other.**

ANIMAL BITES



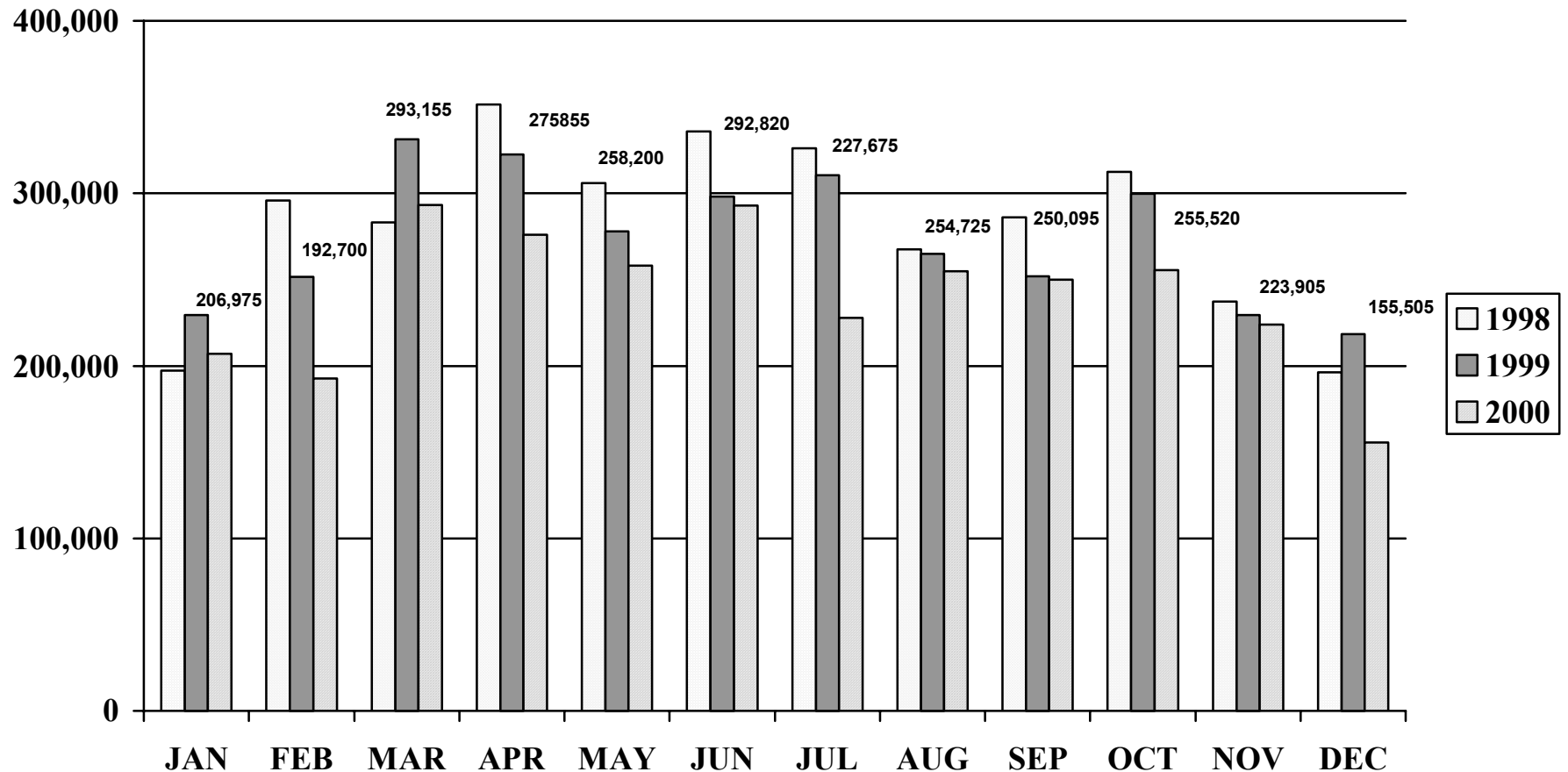
Graph J

Clandestine Drug Labs



Graph K

SEPTAGE APPLIED FOR BENEFICIAL USE AT B&B INJECTION

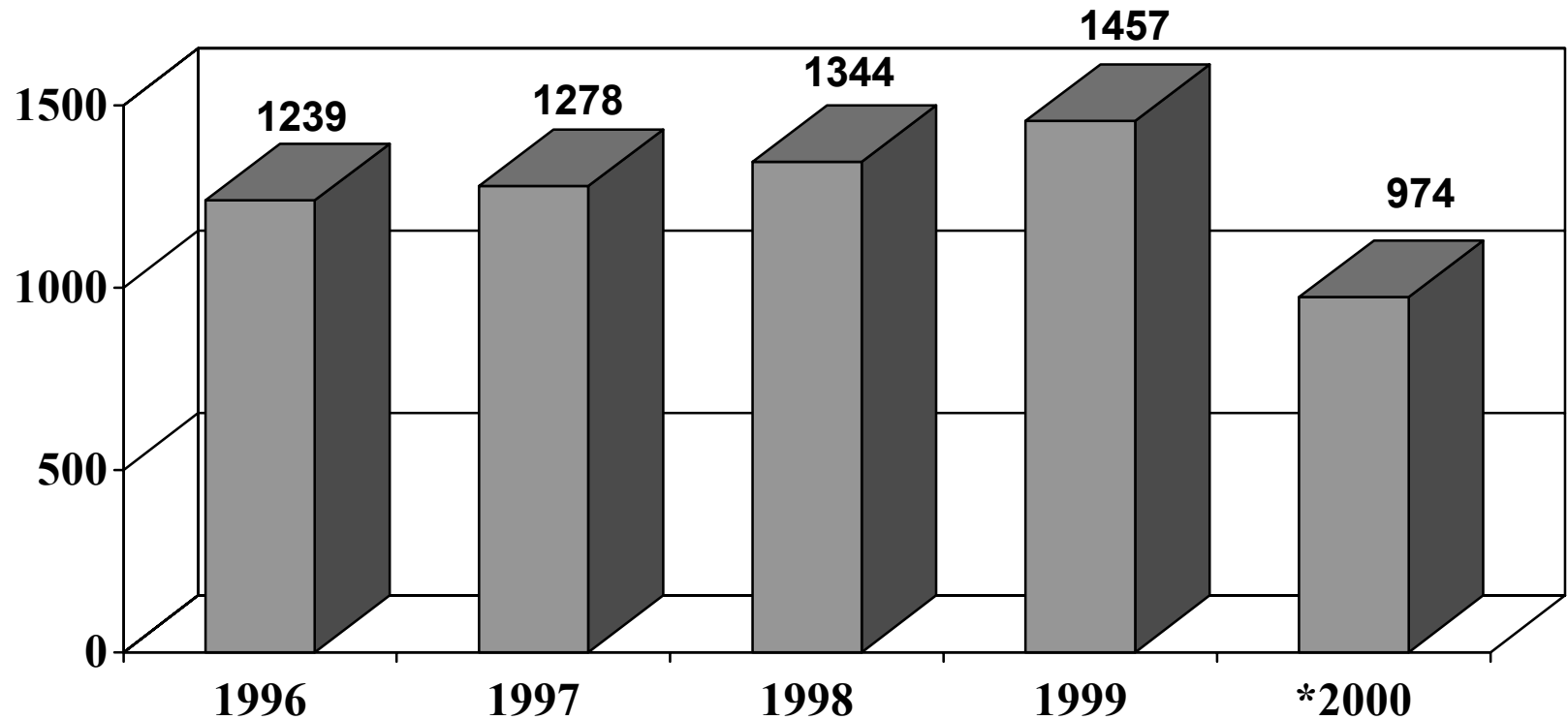


2000 TOTAL=2,887,130 gallons

1999 TOTAL=3,285,160 gallons

1998 TOTAL=3,395,605 gallons

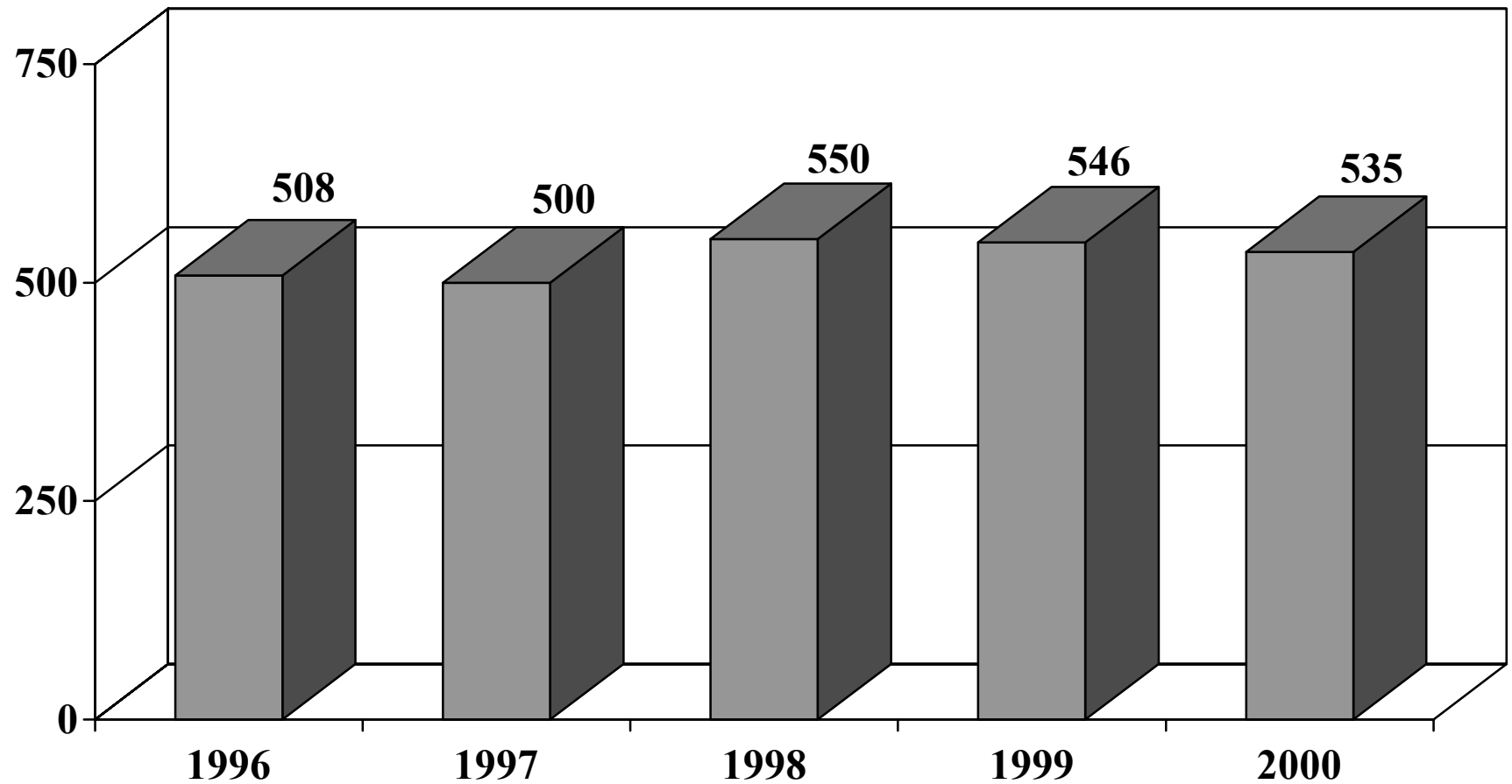
FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT (Permanent)



Graph M

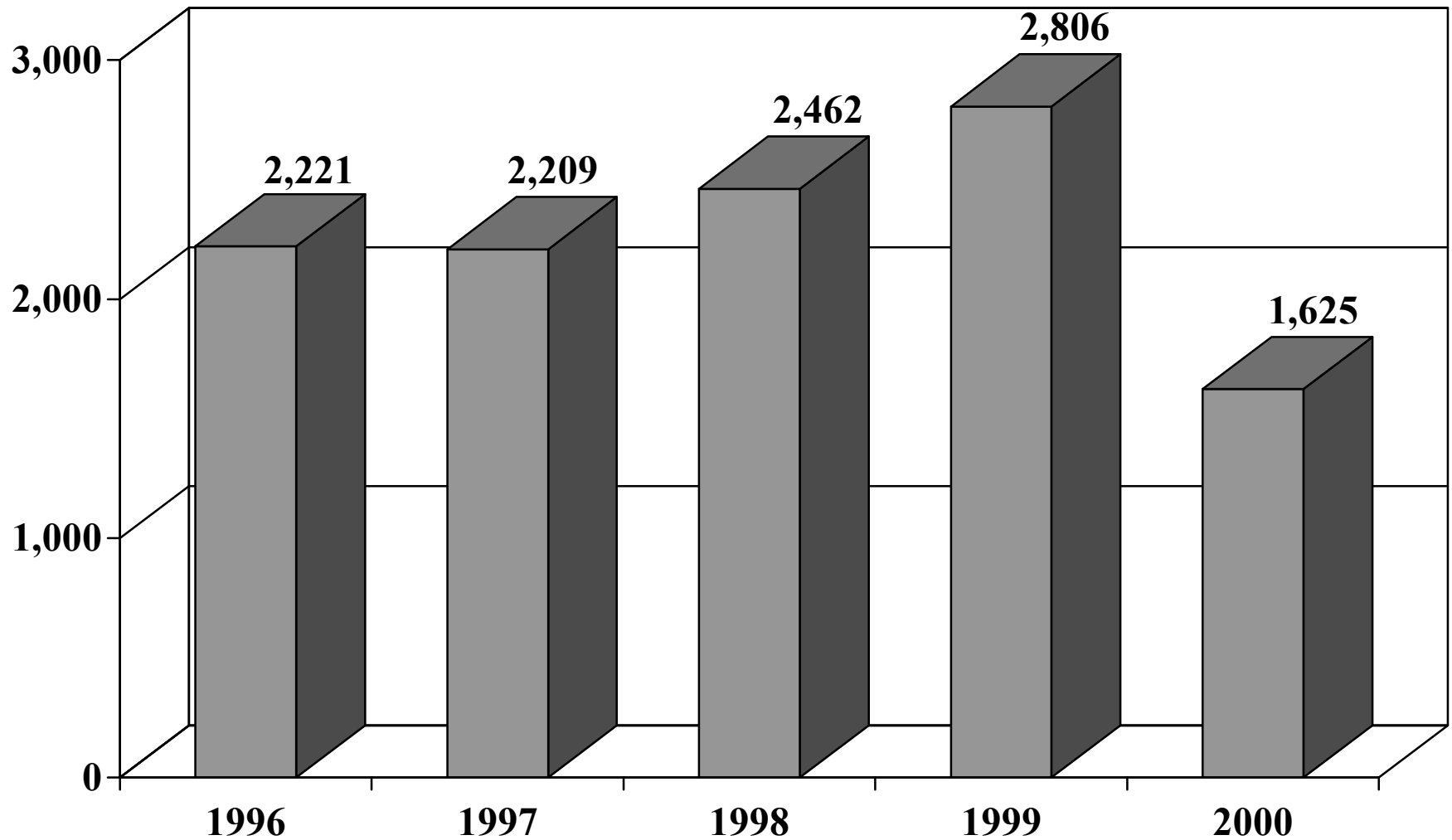
* Criteria for establishment reporting revised/redefined this year

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT (Temporary)



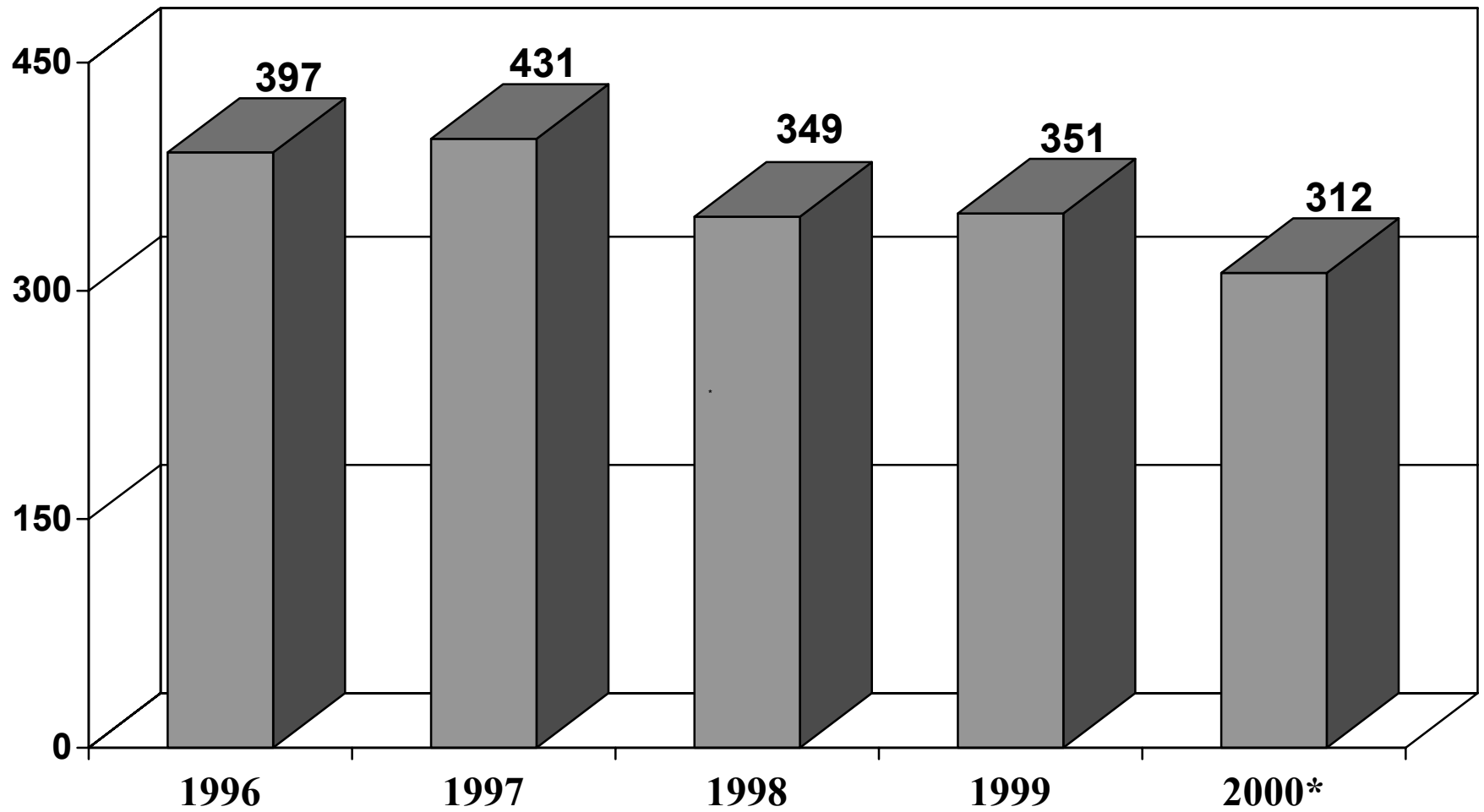
Graph N

FOOD SERVICE INSPECTIONS



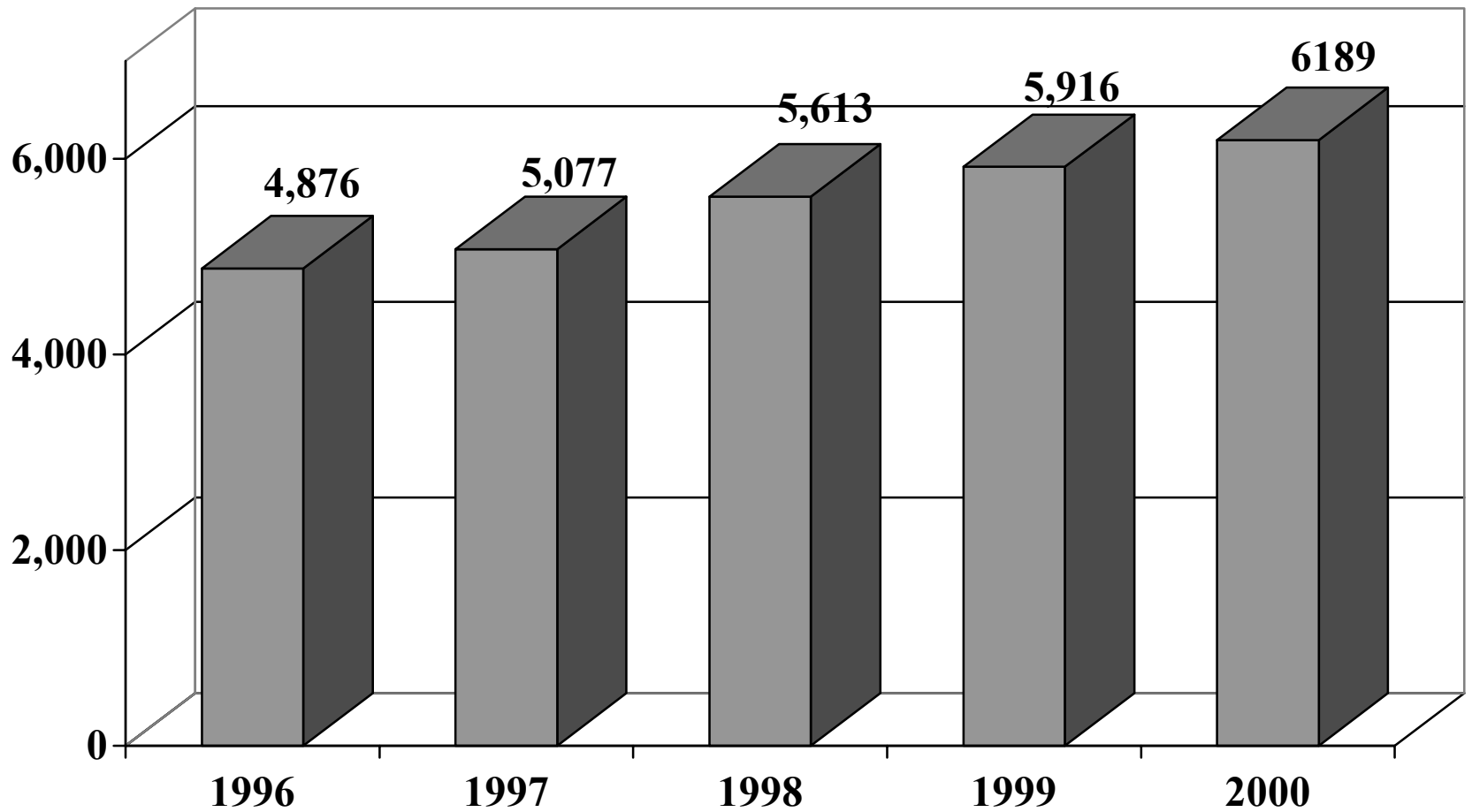
Graph O

FOOD HANDLER CLASSES



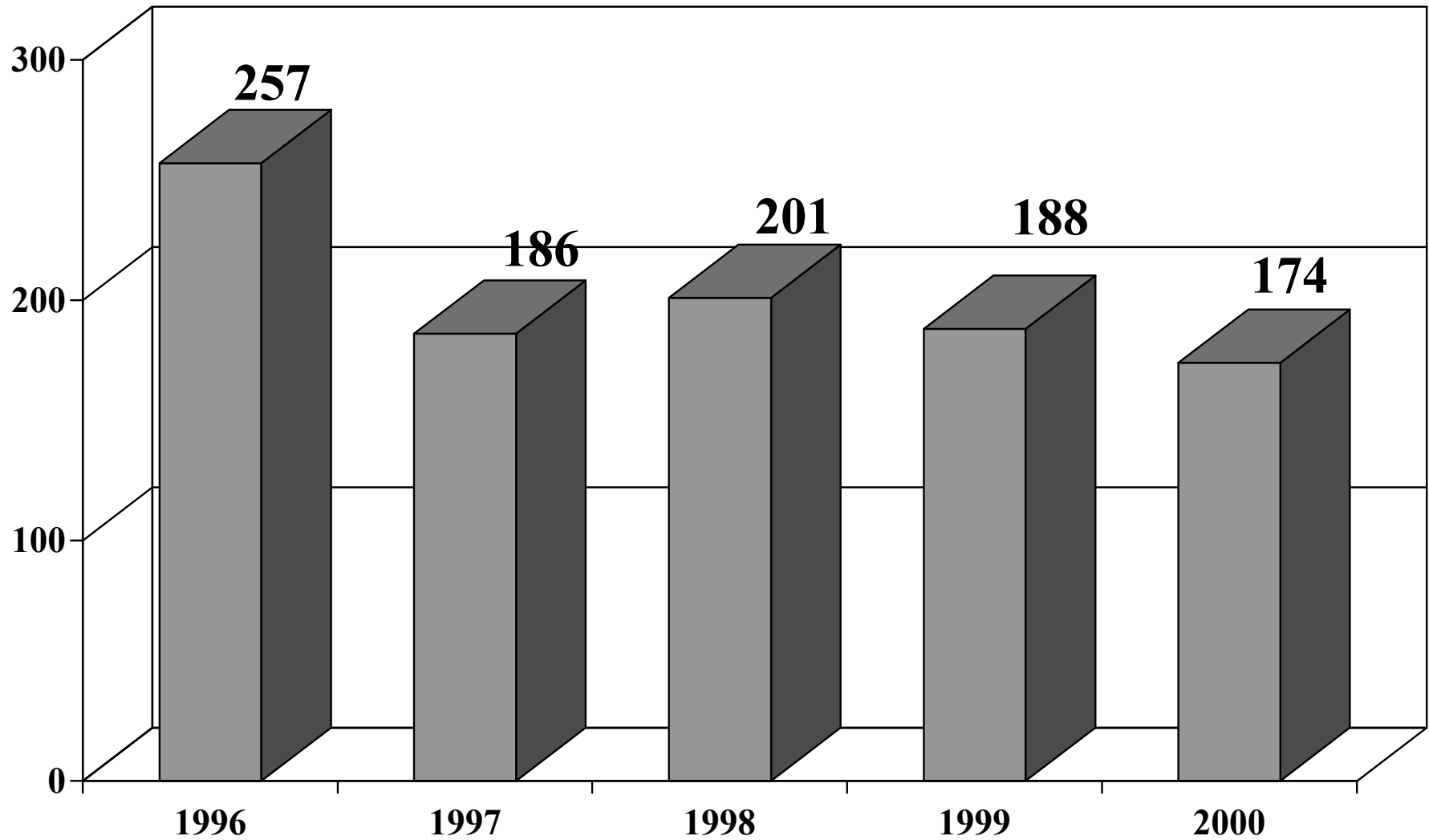
*Class sizes increased and number of classes decreased for 2000

FOOD HANDLER CARDS



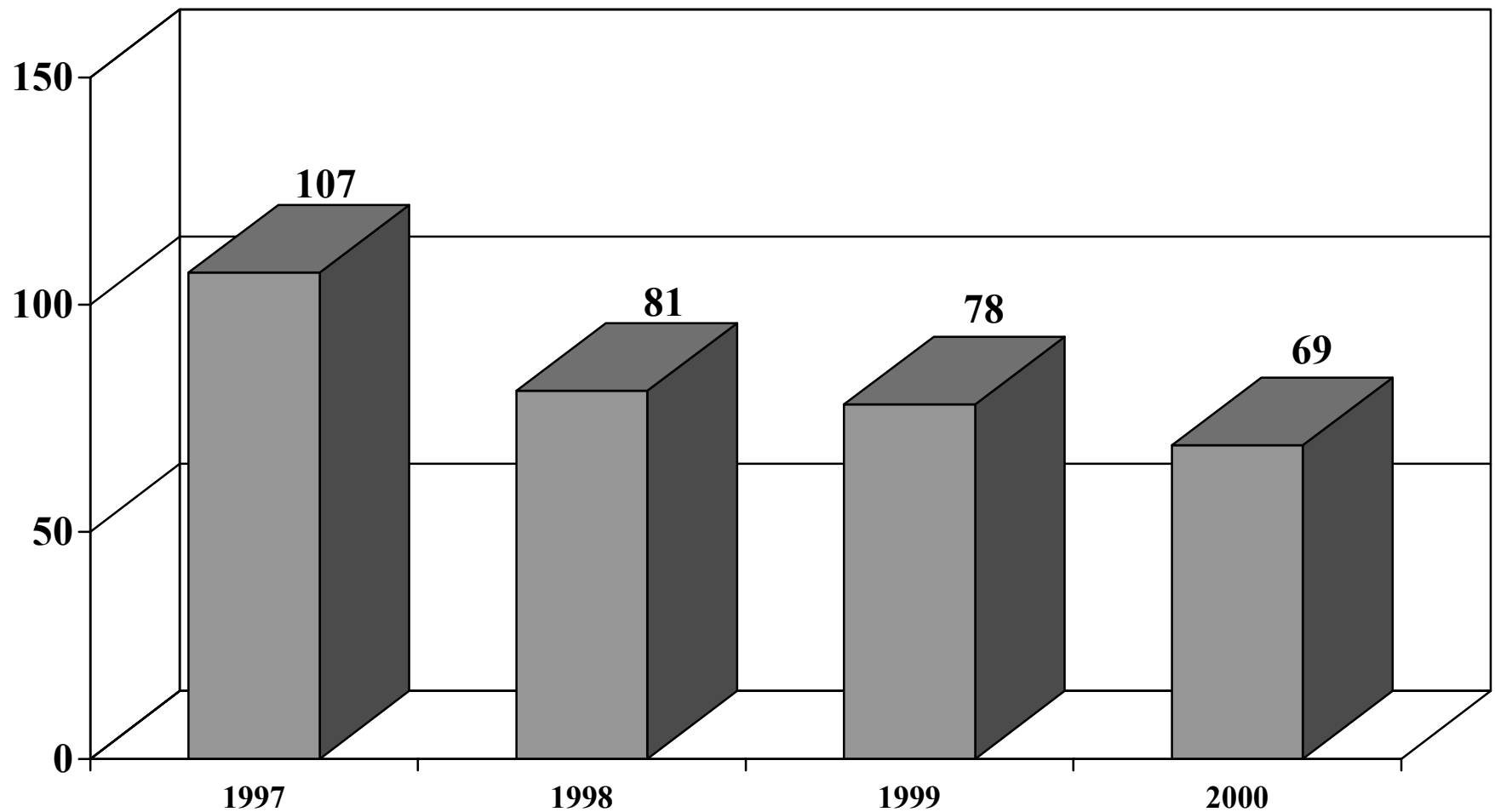
Graph Q

FOOD SERVICE RELATED COMPLAINTS



Graph R

SUSPECT FOODBORNE ILLNESS INVESTIGATIONS



Graph S

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

